

Treatment for Alcohol Addiction Among Native Americans in the United States

Background

- In 2016, the Indian Health Services received \$3,337 per capita in Congressional funding, compared to \$5,000 per capita for prisoners (Arc Health)
- Native Americans have a life expectancy 5.5 years shorter than the US avg for all races (IHS)
- Native Americans have a mortality rate 6.6 times higher than the US avg for all races for alcohol-induced deaths (IHS)
 - 4.6 times higher for chronic liver disease and cirrhosis (IHS)
- Most policies are incredibly outdated
- Factors such as generational trauma and lack of healthcare access often exacerbate the situation

Statistics



There are **less than 3 million** Native Americans in the United States



Fetal alcohol syndrome rates are as high as **2.5 per 1,000** live births within native people



6.8% more Native Americans need treatment for their alcohol use compared to general U.S. population



8.2% more Native Americans need some form of substance abuse treatment compared to others

Previous Policies

- The Indian Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
 - Attempts to coordinate IHS and BIA in efforts to combat the growing crisis of the time
 - Very broad, leading to poor communication between primary agencies
 - Doesn't address funding issues
- Cheyenne River Sioux Alcohol Legislation And Taxation Initiative
 - Began as grassroots movement
 - Implemented in steps
 - Focus on alcohol regulation, with prevention and education programs as a secondary goal
- Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium
 - Breaks treatment down by three demographics: youth, adults, and mothers
 - Receives clients based on court referrals
 - Provides culturally relevant treatment to Alaskan Natives
- Na'nizhoozhi Center Incorporated
 - Non-profit org that works as a treatment center
 - Alternative to "drunk-tanks"
 - Culturally relevant treatment

Conclusions

- Most successful policies seem to be launched at tribal and community level
- Cultural considerations seem to have an important impact on treatment success
- A lack of funding and better general healthcare makes finding treatment options difficult
- Most programs are reactive rather than preventative
- Historical background such as generational trauma as well as the "drunk Indian" stereotype